

April 26, 2013

Honorable Tom Harkin  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, Education and Related  
Agencies  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Senate Dirksen Building, 131  
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Jerry Moran  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, Education and Related  
Agencies  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Senate Dirksen Building, 156  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Moran:

As the subcommittee begins its consideration of a Fiscal Year 2014 appropriation bill for the agencies within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies, I respectfully request support for the programs listed below. The funding requested for the national programs is to be spent at the agencies' discretion within the existing budget line and is not intended for any specific business, state, community or other entity.

### Health and Human Services

#### Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

##### **1. Title:** Rural Health Policy Development

**Program Description:** Rural Health Policy Development activities support a range of policy analysis, research and information dissemination. The program advises the Secretary on how policies affect rural communities and conducts research to inform its policy analysis activities.

**Fiscal Year 2014 President's Budget Request:** \$9,866,000

**Additional Amount Requested:** +\$1 million

**Bill Language Requested:** Section 434(e) of Public Law No. 108-173 is amended by replacing the word "three" with the number "6" and replacing the number "3" with the number "6".

**Report Language Requested:** The Committee understands that many primary care clinics in isolated, remote locations are providing extended stay services and are not staffed or receiving appropriate compensation to provide this service. The Committee encourages HRSA to continue its support of "Frontier Extended Stay Clinic" providers who provide expanded services in remote and isolated primary care clinics to meet the needs of seriously ill or injured patients who cannot be transferred quickly to acute care



referral centers, and to meet the needs of patients who require monitoring and observation for a limited time. \$1,000,000 for each of Fiscal Years 2014, 2015, and 2016 shall support "Frontier Extended Stay Clinics" and shall remain available until expended.

**Rationale:** In response to the growing need for emergency care in rural America, specifically in frontier areas, Congress created the Frontier Extended Stay Clinic (FESC) Demonstration under HRSA and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid. FESC allows remote clinics to treat patients for more extended periods, including overnight stays, and prevents the need for many costly medical evacuation operations to distant hospitals. Extending the FESC Demonstration project will help improve access to care for rural Americans. FESC is a Medicare payment classification pertaining to (1) emergency treatment of patients staying in the clinic for over four hours when transporting them to a hospital is not possible, and (2) short-term (up to 48 hours) monitoring and observation of patients in cases where an EMS transfer or a hospital emergency room visit or stay is unnecessary. A FESC may only be located in a community that is at least 75 miles from the nearest acute care or critical access hospital, or that is inaccessible by public road.

**2. Title:** Area Health Education Centers

**Program Description:** To address health care workforce shortages, particularly those in primary care. This program supports the recruitment and retention of local physicians, students, faculty and other primary care providers in rural and medically underserved areas by providing local, community-based, interdisciplinary primary care training.

**Fiscal Year 2014 President's Budget Request:** \$0

**Additional Amount Requested:** Support Fiscal Year 2012 enacted \$27,230,000

**Rationale:** Serves a vital role in building the health care workforce in rural and underserved areas.

**3. Title:** Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant

**Program Description:** To improve the health of all mothers, children, and their families by reducing health disparities, improving access to health care, and improving the quality of health care.

**Fiscal Year 2014 President's Budget Request:** \$638,646,000

**Additional Amount Requested:** Support President's Budget

*Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)*

**4. Report Language Requested:** *Tribal Behavioral Health Grant program within the Center for Mental Health Services*

In order to address the high incidence of substance abuse and suicide in American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) populations, the bill provides \$20,000,000 for a new Tribal Behavioral Health Grant program within the Center for Mental Health Services. Not less than \$10,000,000 shall be used for competitively awarded grants targeting tribal entities with the highest rates of suicide per capita over the past 10



years. Funds shall be used for effective and promising strategies that address the problems of substance abuse and suicide and promote mental health among AI/AN young people.

**Rationale:** Specific funding for behavioral and mental health of American Indian and Alaska Native populations is paramount to addressing the high suicide and substance abuse issues within the populations.

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

**5. Title:** National Institutes of Health

**Program Description:** Advances fundamental knowledge about the nature and behavior of living systems and the application of that knowledge to extend healthy lives and reduce the burdens of illness and disability.

**Fiscal Year 2014 President's Budget Request:** \$31,331,000,000

**Additional Amount Requested:** Support President's Budget

**Report Language Requested:** The Committee commends the NIH for establishing the Common Fund Human Microbiome Project, which has great potential to advance scientific understanding of many important areas of human health, including the immune system and urges NIH to continue to work to understand the basis of healthy microbiome-induced immunoregulation and how it is altered in disease.

**Rationale:** This study will help inform how the genetic and environmental underpinnings related to the rate of type 1 diabetes increasing at an earlier age could be attributed to the environment.

**Education**

**1. Title:** Alaska Native Student Education

**Program Description:** Provides grants to meet the unique education needs of Alaska Natives and to support supplemental education programs to benefit Alaska Natives.

**Fiscal Year 2014 President's Budget Request:** \$33,185,000

**Additional Amount Requested:** Support President's Budget

**Report Language Requested:** The Committee recognizes that the Alaska Native Education Equity program honors the federal government's responsibility to Native students. Alaska does not receive Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) funding to serve Alaska Natives. American Indians in the Lower 48 do receive BIE funding. The Alaska Native Educational Equity program was established to correct this inequity and to address the severe educational handicaps of Alaska Native schoolchildren. Funds are used for the development and implementation of supplemental educational programs to benefit Alaska Natives. The Committee bill continues language that allows funding provided by this program to be used for construction. The Committee is aware that the ESEA includes a priority for funding under this program for applications from Alaska Native regional nonprofit organizations, or consortia that include at least one Alaska Native regional nonprofit organizations. The Committee directs the Department to ensure

maximum participation of Alaska Native organizations in programs funded under the Alaska Native Educational Equity Act, implement statutory requirements that State education agencies and local education agencies apply in consortia involving Alaska Native organizations pursuant to Section 7305(b) of the ESEA, ensure that all grantees have meaningful plans for consultation with Alaska Native leaders, and strictly adhere to the programmatic priorities contained in the statute. The Committee also directs the Department to prepare and submit a report, within 180 days of enactment of this bill, on how the Department will work to improve consultation with and participation of Alaska Native organizations, Alaska Native regional nonprofit organizations, and consortia that include at least one Alaska Native regional nonprofit organizations in the program.

**Rationale:** These funds address the severe educational handicaps of Alaska Native schoolchildren. Funds are used for the development of supplemental educational programs to benefit Alaska Natives. Supporting Alaska Native educational equity also honors the federal government's responsibility to Native students who live in a state that receives no funding from the Bureau of Indian Education.

**2. Title:** Investing in Innovation

**Program Description:** Supports school districts, groups of schools, educational service agencies, and community organizations efforts to improve student achievement, increase high school graduation rates and improve college enrollment and completion.

**Fiscal Year 2014 President's Budget Requested:** \$215,000,000

**Additional Amount Requested:** Support President's Budget

**Report Language Requested:** The Committee recognizes the program is supporting innovation in improving student achievement and is concerned rural applicants are not seeing the same benefits as urban counterparts. The Committee directs the Department to include a 25 percent set-aside for rural applicants.

**3. Title:** Impact Aid

**Program Description:** The Impact Aid program provides financial support to school districts affected by Federal activities.

**Fiscal Year 2014 President's Budget Requested:** \$1,224,239,000

**Additional Amount Requested:** Support President's Budget

**4. Title:** Rural Education

**Program Description:** The Rural Education Achievement Program authorizes two programs to assist rural school districts in carrying out activities to help improve the quality of teaching and learning in their schools.

**Fiscal Year 2014 President's Budget Requested:** \$179,200,000

**Additional Amount Requested:** Support President's Budget Request



**5. Title:** Federal TRIO Programs

**Program Description:** The TRIO programs provide college preparation and student support programs for middle school, high school, and college students and adults.

**Fiscal Year 2014 President's Budget Requested:** \$839,932,000

**Additional Amount Requested:** Support President's Budget

**6. Title:** Career and Technical Education

**Program Description:** The program supports efforts to improve career and technical education, adult education and literacy systems, and competitive grants and contracts for evaluation, performance measurement and improvement, technical assistance, research and development, innovative programs, and other national activities.

**Fiscal Year 2014 President's Budget Requested:** \$1,140,859,000

**Additional Amount Requested:** Support President's Budget

**7. Title:** Special Education

**Program Description:** Provides formula grants that help states pay the additional costs of providing special education and related services to children with disabilities aged 3 through 21 years. Under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, states are required to provide a free appropriate public education to all children with disabilities.

**Fiscal Year 2014 President's Budget Requested:** \$11,577,855,000

**Additional Amount Requested:** Support President's Budget

**8. Title:** Accelerating Achievement and Ensuring Equity (Title 1)

**Program Description:** Provides funds to states to ensure all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments.

**Fiscal Year 2014 President's Budget Requested:** \$11,681,898,000

**Additional Amount Requested:** Support President's Budget

Thank you for your consideration of these requests. Please do not hesitate to contact my staff member, Lindsay Kavanaugh, at (202) 224-1924 if additional information is required.

Sincerely,



Mark Begich  
United States Senator